

Law Enforcement

Program Description and Mission



The Law Enforcement Program in Region 3 is comprised of 28 Special Agents, nine Wildlife Inspectors, and essential support staff located at the Regional Office at Fort Snelling, Minnesota, and in field offices throughout the eight state area of the upper Midwest.

The broad mission of the enforcement program is to protect foreign and native wildlife - both on and off Service lands - through the application of an assortment of federal wildlife laws, as well as other federal statutes relating to smuggling, conspiracy, and money laundering. These laws include:

- Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act
- Migratory Bird Treaty Act
- Marine Mammal Protection Act
- Endangered Species Act
- Lacey Act
- National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act

The application and enforcement of these and other laws is essential to effectively counteracting the illegal trade in wildlife, which, at the international level is estimated to be the second largest form of black market commerce in the world - second only to drug trafficking.

***...to protect foreign
and native wildlife
- both on and off
Service lands -
- Law Enforcement
Mission***

Summary of Fiscal Year 1998 Accomplishments

Freshwater Mussels

Service agents continued to focus their enforcement and investigative efforts on illegal, large-scale commercial violations involving the exploitation of wildlife resources for profit. These “for-profit” violations have the most significant and detrimental impact on wild populations of protected species.

Multiple investigations during the year led to a number of indictments and prosecutions involving the unlawful take and commercialization of freshwater mussels. During fiscal Year 1998, more than \$1 million in restitution, \$126,000 in criminal fines, 4.5 years of imprisonment, and 22 years of probation were levied by the courts to companies and individuals involved in the illegal trafficking of freshwater mussels. Most of the illegally harvested mussels were destined for overseas companies involved in the multi-million dollar cultured pearl industry. Investigations and prosecutions represent a determined and persistent enforcement effort to protect one of the most vulnerable families of wildlife in America. Of the approximately 300 known species of mussels, 30 are extinct and more than 70 percent are considered endangered, threatened, or are species of special concern. As such, these investigations have taken on a heightened importance and priority in this and other regions having such freshwater mussels. Many of these investigations were undertaken jointly with Service agents from Region 4; numerous state conservation agencies from Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois, Minnesota, Ohio, North Dakota, Kentucky, and West Virginia; and the Criminal Investigation Division of the Internal Revenue Service.

Similarly, investigations into a number of illegal commercial fishery operations were completed. With four of the five Great Lakes bordering on states within the region, protection of interjurisdictional fishery resources has been a high priority. With the final adjudication of several of these cases occurring during the year, the disposition of prosecutions to date relating to the unlawful taking and commercialization of fishery resources includes nearly \$35,000 in restitution, \$46,400 in criminal fines, and 42 months imprisonment.

Contaminant Investigations

Contaminant investigations is another major enforcement initiative in the region. Because of the significant impact that contaminants have on a wide variety of federal trust species, as well as the impact that contaminants have on the environment and human health, these investigations are a high enforcement priority. Contaminated sites such as exposed oil pits and spills are identified through aerial surveillance and other investigative methods and the threats posed to migratory birds are documented. During fiscal year 1998, 17 such sites with associated avian and endangered bat mortalities were documented in central and southern Illinois alone. A recent agreement between the Service and the Environmental Protection Agency now provides for interagency cooperation in contaminant investigations.

Summary of Fiscal Year 1998 Accomplishments (continued)

In addition to enforcement and investigative responsibilities, Special Agents and Wildlife Inspectors also conducted training and outreach efforts. Training in a variety of subjects was provided to state conservation and police officers, sheriffs, Refuge officers, and a number of native American police and conservation officers.

Public outreach and partnership efforts with state, federal, and foreign counterparts continued to be a major emphasis of the enforcement program. In addition to conventional educational presentations at zoos, schools and business groups, the Law Enforcement program initiated and coordinated Service participation in the Experimental Aircraft Association's annual air show at Whitman Field in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. During the summer show, this small airfield becomes the busiest airport in the world, allowing the Service to educate thousands of people about Service programs. Nearly one million visitors from 76 nations attended the air show, including more than 1,100 registered journalists from throughout the world.

Wildlife Inspections

The Wildlife Inspection program is also an integral part of enforcement efforts in the region. Inspectors at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport oversaw the processing of approximately \$25 million in wildlife trade and four million international passengers through the port. In addition to the detection and documentation of numerous wildlife violations, inspection staff conducted more than 100 educational presentations. Inspectors at both of the region's non-designated wildlife ports at Detroit Metropolitan Airport and Minneapolis - St. Paul International Airport conducted similar enforcement and outreach efforts. During Fiscal Year 1998, \$27,905 were paid in fines relating to import / export violations. Additionally, the staff participated in activities at the U.S. Customs "Open House" for the import trade community and hosted a media event with the Service's Director which focused on the illegal trade in wildlife.

Detroit, Michigan, is a designated border port which incorporates Detroit Metropolitan Airport, the seventh busiest in the United States; the Ambassador Bridge which is the busiest international crossing in the nation; and the Blue Water Bridge at Port Huron which is the nation's third busiest international crossing. The Service's wildlife inspector at this location documented numerous import violations and, in October alone, nearly \$8,000 in fines were paid. In March 1998, the inspector, in cooperation with personnel from USDA and U.S. Customs, seized 20 vials of medicinals - valued at \$50,000 - made from the gall bladder of an Asian Sun bear, an Appendix I species.

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Summary of Fiscal Year 1998 Accomplishments (continued)

Service special agents and wildlife inspectors continued their outreach efforts throughout the year by engaging in a variety of activities such as participating in roundtable discussions with approximately sixty importers and exporters at the World Trade Center in Clayton, Missouri; attending and participating in Detroit Zoo's Earth Day events; presenting an on-site, behind the scenes look at the Wildlife Inspection Program at O'Hare International Airport to the Lincoln Park Zoo's winter series program entitled, "Wildlife Wars"; presenting a workshop at the Saskatchewan Outfitters Association in Canada; and hosting various chambers of commerce groups.

Service agents were active in integrating enforcement efforts into the ecosystem approach to wildlife management. Agents presented materials on the ecosystem approach to the new agent class at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center; presented programs and instruction to congressional members and staffs; and presenting papers at professional wildlife meetings concerning the importance of cultivating strong relationships over a wide base of ecosystem partners throughout the United States.

Goals for Fiscal Year 1999

- To continue documenting violations which have the most significant impact on the wildlife resource, such as wild populations of federally protected species, and species protected by state or foreign laws, where there is an emphasis on unlawful commercial exploitation and/or habitat destruction or modification.
- To aggressively prosecute individuals, groups, and criminal enterprises associated with such violations.
- To continue promoting and encouraging voluntary compliance with federal wildlife laws through public educational and awareness efforts, and the creation of a deterrent effect through successful prosecutions and outreach efforts.



USFWS Photo

During fiscal Year 1998, more than \$1 million in restitution, \$126,000 in criminal fines, 4.5 years of imprisonment, and 22 years of probation were levied by the courts to companies and individuals involved in the illegal trafficking of freshwater mussels.

- Law Enforcement Accomplishment

Law Enforcement Fiscal Year 1998 Accomplishments

Great Lakes Ecosystem

Special Agents Participate in Northern Indiana Waterfowl Enforcement Task Force *Indianapolis Law Enforcement Office*

On November 22 and 23, 1997, Service special agents and Indiana conservation officers conducted a joint state/federal waterfowl enforcement task force in northwest Indiana. Eleven hunting clubs and 91 hunters were contacted. Few violations were observed, mainly due to hunter compliance and few birds present in the area. The task force's efforts were successful also because of the positive publicity received. **11/97**

Man Claiming to Be American Indian Gets Probation for Violating Eagle Protection Act *Region 3 Law Enforcement Office*

A man alleging to be an American Indian was convicted in federal court in Michigan on one misdemeanor count under the Eagle Protection Act. The investigation revealed that the individual was in possession of a large number of eagle feathers and that he was not a member of any recognized tribe. The court placed the defendant on two years probation and ordered him to serve 500 hours of community service with a local Indian tribe. **4/98**

Menominee Tribal Police Trained by Service Special Agent

Madison Law Enforcement Office
Special Agent Ed Spoon conducted a handgun re-qualification and training session for 16 commissioned police officers of the Menominee Tribal Police Department at the police range near Keshena, Wis. The police department requested Special Agent Spoon's assistance after they heard about previous firearms training Spoon conducted with Menominee Tribal Conservation Wardens. The Chief of Police, Karen Neconish-Gardner, personally thanked Spoon for his help. The only firearms instructor on the Menominee Reservation recently underwent heart bypass surgery. Special Agent Spoon's willingness to assist allowed both the Tribal Police Department and Tribal Conservation Department to satisfy mandates for semi-annual firearms qualification. **5/98**

Service Reaches Thousands at Oshkosh Air Show Outreach Event

St Paul Law Enforcement Office

The missions of the Service's law enforcement, wildlife refuges and other programs were displayed to an estimated 100,000 people during the Experimental Aircraft Association's annual air show in Oshkosh, Wis. More than 860,000 aviation enthusiasts attended the event, held July 31 to August 4, 1998. More than 100,000 visitors toured the Federal Pavilion, site of the Service exhibits which featured the Region's R-3 Partenavia airplane, one of only two aircraft of its type in the United States. Also featured were a wildlife refuges display, and eight Bald eagles, furnished by Law Enforcement. More than 35 Service volunteers staffed information booths during the massive outreach event. The aircraft, displays and eagles generated enormous interest in the Service and its mission, while providing an excellent vehicles for public outreach. Other partners at the Federal Pavilion included 15 U.S. and Canadian government agencies **8/98**

Random Detroit Port Inspections Reveal Fish Import Violations

Detroit Metro Airport Law Enforcement Office
During the weekend of September 25, 1998, the Wildlife Inspector and Special Agent from the Ann Arbor Law Enforcement office conducted approximately 12 hours of random inspections of persons declaring wildlife importations. Most of the importations were sport-caught fish. Ontario Provincial law states fish must be identifiable by leaving one square inch of skin on each fillet, and that the number of fish must be countable. Licensing and possession regulations were also enforced. Out of the approximate 50 imports during that 12 hour time frame, five violations were detected. Four of the violations were for unidentifiable fish, and one violation was for possession of an over limit of fish. It is estimated that during the peak fishing season in Ontario, more than 100 fishermen import fish daily at Michigan ports which includes Detroit, Port Huron, and Sault Ste. Marie. **9/98**

Enforcement Agencies From Service, EPA Form Workgroup

Rosemont Law Enforcement Office

The Service's Region 3 and Environmental Protection Agency's Region 5 have formed a workgroup to address the problem of exposed oil pits and spills that cause wildlife mortalities and endangerment to human health and the environment. Aerial surveys will help locate these sites. Sites operated by companies and individuals who do not voluntarily comply with environmental protection regulations will be prioritized by the workgroup for enforcement action by the state, EPA or the Department of Justice. Service Law Enforcement will address migratory bird and endangered species mortalities unilaterally. The EPA has agreed to allocate \$10,000 to the Service through an interagency agreement for aerial survey and reconnaissance flights to locate problem sites. Initial surveys will be conducted over the oil fields of Indiana. **7/98**

Five Elephant Tusks Seized at Airport in Columbus, Ohio

Detroit Metro Airport Law Enforcement Office

Five elephant tusks illegally imported into the United States were seized July 13, 1998 at an airport in Columbus, Ohio. The ivory tusks were flown by private jet to Columbus from Morocco. The tusks were reportedly purchased from an antique dealer in Morocco for \$12,000 and were said to be for personal use. U.S. Customs seized the tusks for the Service after determining the tusks did not meet legal requirements for importation. The importer has abandoned the tusks, which have since been turned over to the Service. Following a 60-day waiting period, the tusks will be donated to zoos and schools for educational purposes. The ban on importation of elephant ivory into the United States is still in effect with few exemptions. **8/98**

Service Provides Wildlife Laws Class to Indiana Conservation Officer Recruits

Indianapolis Law Enforcement Office

On September 2, 1998, Special Agent Harris provided a summary of federal wildlife laws and regulations to the 24 newly hired Indiana Conservation Officer Recruits in Warsaw, Indiana. The officers also had the opportunity to participate in a waterfowl enforcement detail during the early dove, teal and goose opener, where they contacted numerous hunters and observed several violations. **9/98**

Upper Mississippi River Ecosystem

Golf Professionals Plead Guilty in Geese Shooting Incident

Des Moines Law Enforcement Office

Service Special Agents worked with Iowa Department of Natural Resources Conservation to apprehend two golf course employees who killed geese at Legion Golf Course in Marshalltown, Iowa. The two golfers, both course professionals, shot the geese with a rifle because they considered the geese to be nuisance to golfers using the course. Both were prosecuted and paid fines in the case. **11/97**

Dealer Fined \$10,000 for Illegally Shipping Reptiles From Spain to U.S.

Region 3 Law Enforcement Office

A reptile dealer involved in the smuggling of rare and protected reptiles from Spain and the shipment of nearly 70 poisonous snakes through the U.S. mails was sentenced in Federal District Court in Illinois in November, 1997. The defendant received a \$10,000 fine, six months home detention, two years probation, and was required to submit to two unannounced inspections of his residence during his probationary period. **11/97**

Special Agents Instruct Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Warden Recruits

Madison Law Enforcement Office

Special agents instructed a class of 17 conservation warden recruits about federal laws enforced by the Service. The agents emphasized the Law Enforcement Division's desire to work closely with state conservation wardens in accomplishing its mission. The theme of the day's presenters was "Building Partnerships." Recruits received an overview of the work of the Service with an emphasis on Service activities in Wisconsin. Others involved in the training included the Wisconsin State Patrol, Sheriff's Office, and Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission. **3/98**

Mussel Broker Fined for Illegal Shell Trade *Peoria Law Enforcement Office*

A California man who sold shells of freshwater mussels taken in Illinois waters without a license was fined \$5,000 and ordered to pay an additional \$2,500 for cost of a mussel dealer's license. The broker, Michael David Venovich, brokered the purchase and export of 34,000 pounds of mussel shells to Japan where they were sold for more than \$67,000. Because the mussels were not purchased legally and were shipped out of Illinois, the activity was a violation of the Lacey Act. **12/97**

Service Special Agent Teaches First-Second Graders About Wild Turkeys *Madison Law Enforcement Office*

Special Agent Ed Spoon gave a 45-minute presentation to 19 first and second graders at Country View Elementary School, Verona, Wis., about wild turkeys. The class is currently studying birds. Special Agent Spoon brought in turkey wings, tails and other parts to show the differences between adult and juvenile male and female turkeys. He showed a short video segment of a male turkey gobbling and strutting and demonstrated use of the box call, slate call, and diaphragm call. **4/98**

Six Indicted For Illegally Harvesting Mussels From Six States *Region 3 Law Enforcement Office*

Six individuals and one company were charged April 24, 1998, in a 59-count indictment with conspiracy and violations of the Lacey Act relating to the illegal harvest of freshwater mussels from six midwestern states. The indictment, which was returned by a federal grand jury in the Southern District of Iowa, was the culmination of an intensive three-year investigation which documented the unlawfully taking mussels over a four year period in Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois, Minnesota, North Dakota, and Ohio freshwater mussels. The unlawfully harvested freshwater mussels, valued at more than \$300,000, were destined for overseas companies involved in the cultured pearl industry. Each of the counts carries a maximum penalty of up to five years in prison and up to \$250,000 in fines. The investigation was conducted by Service agents in cooperation with state natural resource officers from Iowa, Illinois, Ohio, Minnesota, North Dakota, Wisconsin and Michigan, and the Criminal Investigation Division of the Internal Revenue Service. **4/98**

Paroled Felon Arrested on Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge *Springfield Law Enforcement Office*

On November 17, 1997, Steven Pogue (alias Bruce Owens,) was arrested late at night on the Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge while possessing ammunition and a weapon. Pogue was on parole for a 1979 rape conviction at the time and had been arrested and convicted numerous times by Service agents across the country for other felonies, including fugitive in possession of a firearm, Social Security fraud, and poaching. On September 3, 1998, Pogue was convicted in a jury trial at the U.S. District Court, East Saint Louis, Ill. Pogue is a world class bird taxidermist **9/98**

Mississippi Headwaters Ecosystem

Operation Outback Results in Convictions, Fines, and Community Service *St. Paul Law Enforcement Office*

In January 1996, Service Law Enforcement agents learned that reptiles in Australia were being poached by two men from the Twin Cities area. In a separate, concurrent investigation, a U.S. Customs' dog alerted on a package containing live reptiles from Australia. at the Federal Express hub in Memphis, Tennessee. Cooperative efforts between the agencies revealed four men, two in Minnesota and two in Florida, were involved in the smuggling operation. Investigators determined that over a three year period, the suspects were going to Australia and smuggling back protected and endangered species, including geckos, lizards, black headed pythons, and skunks valued at over \$170,000. Court proceedings resulted with the four defendants receiving a total of 23 months in prison; 10 years probation; \$22,800 in fines and 250 hours of community service. **10/97**

Illinois Hunter Pleads Guilty to Killing Swan, Restitution Paid to Swan Recovery Program

Springfield Law Enforcement Office

A Dawson, Ill., hunter paid more than \$1,500 in fines and court costs after pleading guilty to killing a trumpeter swan Nov. 11, 1998, at the Lower 40 Duck Club on Ingram Lake in Mason County, Illinois. Conservation Police Officers from Illinois' Department of Natural Resources and the Service investigated the incident. The investigation revealed that Larry R. Fletcher of Dawson had shot, killed, and then hid the swan. Fletcher was charged in U.S. District Court, Springfield, Illinois, with unlawfully killing the protected swan, a violation of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. On February 24, 1998, Fletcher plead guilty in a federal court and fined \$250.00 plus \$25.00 court costs, and ordered to pay \$1,250 in restitution to the Trumpeter Swan Recovery Program. **2/98**

Bald Eagles Die Near El Dara, Illinois

Springfield Law Enforcement Office

Service special agents responded to a call from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources concerning a die-off of bald eagles on Kiser Creek, near El Dara, Illinois. During a field inspection on February 15, 1998, five dead bald eagles and three sick bald eagles were recovered from a roost site along the creek. The dead birds were seized by the agents and forwarded to the National Fish and Wildlife Forensics Lab, Ashland, Oregon, to determine cause of death. It is suspected that the eagles were poisoned. The three sick eagles were brought to an area vet who treated the eagles. All three recovered and were released on Feb. 24, 1998, along the Mississippi River near Louisiana, Mo. **2/98**

Ohio River Ecosystem

Russian Student Volunteers at Muscatatuck National Wildlife Refuge

Indianapolis Law Enforcement Office

On September 11, 1998, Special Agent Larry Harris and Mikhail Alpatov, a foreign exchange student from Russia, completed 20 hours of volunteer work at Muscatatuck National Wildlife Refuge, where they pressure cleaned and refinished the wooden deck of the refuge headquarters building. Mikhail is interested in learning more about the Service and its role in the protection of our nation's wildlife resources. **9/98**

Federal Wildlife Laws Taught During Refuge Retreat

Indianapolis Law Enforcement Office

On September 22-23, 1998, Special Agent Larry Harris participated in a team building retreat at Jefferson Proving Ground hosted by Muscatatuck National Wildlife Refuge. The retreat was part of an effort to plan for the future of Muscatatuck National Wildlife Refuge and Jefferson Proving Ground, and to learn how each person and group fits into overall conservation efforts. The group consisted of individuals from different agencies and organizations who share common interests, learned how problems can be solved by teamwork. Special Agent Harris provided information and discussion on federal wildlife statutes and regulations. **9/98**

Indiana South Waterfowl Enforcement Task Force

Indianapolis Law Enforcement Office

On December 6-7, 1997, Service special agents and Indiana Department of Natural Resources conservation officers conducted a joint waterfowl enforcement task force detail in west central Indiana. Although birds were scarce, a total of 93 waterfowl hunters were contacted with 16 violations observed. **12/97**

American Western Refining Fined For Migratory Bird Treaty Violations

Rosemont Law Enforcement Office

American Western Refining, L.P., of Illinois, paid a \$1,575.00 fine on Feb. 27, 1998, for the unlawful take of a green-backed heron, redhead duck, American robin, wood duck, mourning dove, two brown thrashers, two red-winged blackbirds and two common grackles protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. The company has been in bankruptcy proceedings for more than a year, but was persuaded to net the large exposed oil pit where agents found the avian mortalities in June of 1997. During their June visit, the agents also discovered a large petroleum discharge into a wetland area adjacent to the American Western Refining operations. The discharge, now believed to have been on-going for at least thirteen years appears to be a mixture of kerosene and diesel fuel floating on top of the water table. A formal EPA cleanup was initiated. **2/98**

Lower Missouri River Ecosystem

Service Special Agent Gives Presentation on Bird Baiting Laws

St. Peters Law Enforcement Office

Special Agent Dan Burleson gave a presentation about baiting to the Missouri Department of Conservation - Ozark Region. Burleson covered the Migratory Bird Treaty Act baiting regulations, penalties, documentation required of a baiting case, and the elements necessary to make a case. Burleson included examples, photos from previous baiting cases and answered questions from the protection division agents attending the training. **10/97**

Missouri Hunters Caught With Too Many Geese

Jefferson City Law Enforcement Office

On October 26, 1997, a Missouri Conservation Officer informed the Service about a hunting club that he believed was taking over limits of waterfowl. An investigation confirmed the over limits. Law enforcement officers later contacted four members of the club and seized 61 Canada geese. The possession limit of Canada geese is four geese per person or 16 geese for the four members. The season for Canada geese in the Swan Lake Zone had been open for three days. To date, 11 defendants have been identified and charged with 19 counts of Migratory Bird Treaty Act violations—take over limits, exceed the possession limit, etc. The defendants were members of Ducks Unlimited and were very cooperative during the investigation. Approximately 50 federal counts were identified that could be charged along with numerous State game laws. **10/97**

Missouri Task Force Uncovers Waterfowl Baiting

St. Peters Law Enforcement Office

A weekend waterfowl enforcement task force in Missouri uncovered two baiting areas and the apprehension of two hunters hunting in them. A total of nine violators were cited. Violations included -nine violations of hunting over bait; three violations of hunting with an invalid migratory bird hunting and conservation stamp; and two violations of possessing lead shot. **10/97**

Service, State Law Enforcement Agents Foil Ozark 'Deer Doggers'

Jefferson City Law Enforcement Office

Service law enforcement agents assisted agents from the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) in patrolling National Forest land for hunters illegally harvesting white-tailed deer. The interagency task force was formed after Missouri Conservation Officers were threatened by local violators. True to local tradition in the southeast Ozarks, the local outlaws illegally use dogs to hunt deer. In 1996, a Missouri Conservation Officer was assaulted and seriously injured by "deer doggers" in the Ozarks. This year the Ripley County Sheriff informed the MDC that the local outlaws had put the word out that if they were stopped by an Agent, "the agent's body would not be found this time." The MDC requested law enforcement assistance from the Service. Five Service special agents worked with the MDC during the deer season. No conservation agents were assaulted, and multiple arrests were made, including two for illegally hunting deer with the aid of dogs. Two hunters were also apprehended during the task force for hunting white-tailed deer on Mingo National Wildlife Refuge with rifles in a closed area. **11/97**

Missouri Road-Block Stymies Illegal Hunters

St. Peters Law Enforcement Office

Service special agents participated in a Madison County road block operated by Missouri Highway Patrol and the Missouri Department of Conservation. Forty-three violations were documented, including 12 involving waterfowl. The waterfowl violations included over-possession limits and transporting without species identification. Two hunters entered the road block with over 40 ducks. The maximum possession limit for them was 24. The two left the road block with no ducks. There were also numerous violations involving white-tailed deer. Possession of illegal drugs, alcohol, and vehicle registration violations were also documented. The majority of the violations were wildlife crimes. **11/97**

Missouri Swan Shooter Cited

St. Peters Law Enforcement Office

After receiving a complaint of a swan being shot at a St. Charles, Mo., duck club, Service Special Agent Robert Leapley searched the club and found no evidence of the swan or hunters in the field. Leapley later found three hunters cleaning quail at a caretaker's residence. Two hunters admitted to hunting goose earlier that day, and then one hunter showed Leapley a trash can containing a dead tundra swan. The swan was seized and the hunter was subsequently issued a violation notice for federal court. **1/98**

Turkey Hunters Tagged at Road Block

Jefferson City Law Enforcement Office

On April 26, 1998, a road block was set up to check hunters and fishermen leaving Missouri along U.S. Highway 63, just north of the Arkansas State line. It was the first Sunday of the Missouri spring turkey season and many hunters were heading home. The Service and Missouri Department of Conservation received complaints that non-resident hunters were killing turkeys in Missouri and not tagging or checking them into an official check station as required by Missouri law. When a poacher fails to tag and check a wild turkey, he will then unlawfully return to take another turkey. The limit of turkeys in the spring season in Missouri is two for the three-week season. The wildlife road block was operated for about four hours, and was manned by law enforcement officers from the Service, Missouri Department of Conservation, U.S. Forest Service, Missouri Highway Patrol, Oregon County Sheriff, and Thayer Police Department. Fifteen violations were cited—nine for wildlife and six for other charges. Seven were charged for turkey violations. Two were written for transporting illegal fish. **4/98**

Reptile Showmen Arrested for Participating in Illegal Reptile Trade

Indianapolis Law Enforcement Office

Service special agents assisted Indiana conservation officers with a raid at the Mid-west Reptile Show in Indianapolis, Indiana, June 27, 1998, where numerous participants were arrested on charges of illegally dealing in protected reptiles and amphibians. The Service became involved in the investigation when Indiana covert investigators learned that many of the suspects under investigation also were violating federal law by unlawfully dealing in protected wildlife in interstate commerce. **6/98.**

Missouri Man Sentenced in Bald Eagle Death

Jefferson City Law Enforcement Office

Brian K. Young, 36, of Lexington, Mo., was sentenced June 30, 1998, to one year in prison, the maximum sentence under federal law, for killing a bald eagle on Nov. 15, 1995. Young admitted shooting the eagle to Service Special Agent Jim Person, saying that he thought he was shooting at a buzzard at the time. Both birds are protected by federal law. Young is set to begin serving his sentence July 27.. He will also spend one year on supervised probation after his jail term. The case was investigated by the Service and the Missouri Department of Conservation. **7/98**

Missouri Turkey Poachers Apprehended

St. Peters, Mo. Law Enforcement Office

Service Special Agents, working with personnel from the Missouri Department of Conservation and the U.S. National Park Service conducted a covert detail during the spring Missouri turkey hunting season to apprehend wild turkey poachers in the Mark Twain National Forest. Arrests were made and information was gathered that will lead to additional arrests. Violations included over-bags of turkeys, failure to tag turkeys, failure to check turkeys, baiting for migratory doves and waterfowl. **7/98**

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